



Department  
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The Rt Hon Andrea Leadsom MP  
From the Secretary of State

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Rt Hon George Howarth MP  
House of Commons  
London  
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Our ref: MC421482/SC

3 February 2017

Dear George,

Thank you for your email of 31 January on behalf of a number of your constituents about controls on fur and fur skin products.

Defra is responsible for controls on furs and fur and skin products. The UK Border Agency works to ensure that animal fur and animal skins are imported legally.

Strict EU rules are in place to ensure that animals kept for fur production are kept, trapped and slaughtered humanely. Special recommendations cover requirements for mink, ferret, foxes and chinchilla, amongst others. Some skin and fur products may never be legally imported into the UK for commercial use. These include seal skins and products, and cat and dog fur and products.

If the fur is from an endangered species protected by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), its import and trade will be subject to CITES controls, as will any body part of that species also being imported and traded. These controls are implemented by the EU Wildlife Trade Regulations.

The Government has no plans to remove these controls. The European Communities Act will be repealed on the day we leave the European Union – and the authority of EU law in Britain will end. We will convert the body of existing EU law into domestic law and in future Parliament will be free to amend, repeal and improve any law it chooses. The Government believes that national import bans would be less effective than working around the world to agree animal welfare standards and phase out cruel and inhumane farming and trapping practices. It is the Government's view that this approach will lead to a higher level of animal welfare worldwide than could be achieved by the UK acting alone.

I hope that this reply is helpful.

Best wishes,

**Andrea Leadsom MP**  
**Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs**